

REMARKS

Applicants have received the Office Action mailed September 19, 2006. Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 16 and 17 and canceled claims 6-7 and 20-28 without prejudice; claims 2-3, 5, 8-10 and 12-19 have also been amended. Claims 1-5 and 8-19 are pending, and Applicants request reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Amendments to the Specification

The specification has been amended to correct a typographical error that is clear from the context of the amendment. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 112

The Office Action rejected claims 6 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants have canceled claim 6 and have amended claim 1 to provide antecedent basis for “the first name identifier” in claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants request that the § 112 rejections be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 101

The Office Action rejected claims 16 and 20-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Without conceding the propriety of these rejections, Applicants, in order to advance prosecution, have amended claim 16 as the Office Action suggested—in particular, to recite a “computer-readable medium,” rather than a “machine-readable medium.” Applicants have also canceled claims 20-28. Accordingly, Applicants request that the § 101 rejections be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office action rejected claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication 2004/0093317 (“Swan”). Applicants have amended the independent claims 1, 16 and 17; as indicated above, claims 6-7 and 20-28 have been canceled. Applicants submit that each of the independent claims 1, 16 and 17, as amended, are patentable over Swan, as are the corresponding dependent claims.

Support for the amendments can be found throughout the originally filed specification, including, for example, at page 2, lines 13-15; page 6, lines 24-25; and in originally filed claims 7 and 21. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

As amended, Claim 1 is directed to “[a] method to retrieve information that contains name and relationship information.” The method includes “accepting a search request from a single text-entry field of a user interface associated with a database, the search request comprising a plurality of text characters, wherein one or more of the text characters specify a first name identifier, one or more of the text characters specify a second name identifier, and one or more of the text characters specify a relationship between the first name identifier and the second name identifier.” The method also includes “using the search request to retrieve one or more search results, wherein each search result contains the first name identifier, the second name identifier, and information representing the specified relationship between the first name identifier and the second name identifier.” The method also includes “displaying in the user interface the first name identifier for each search result in textual form.”

Swan generally describes “automated techniques for sharing contact information, such as information that might be included on a business card...” (See Swan, page 1, at ¶ 0002). Swan also describes a “contact record display interface 250” through which an end user can enter criteria to search for contact information. (See Swan, page 9, at ¶ 0104; FIG. 10).

Swan does not anticipate the subject matter set forth in amended independent claim 1. For example, Swan does not describe or suggest “accepting a search request from a single text-entry field of a user interface associated with a database, the search request comprising a plurality of text characters, wherein one or more of the text characters specify a first name

identifier, one or more of the text characters specify a second name identifier, and one or more of the text characters specify a relationship between the first name identifier and the second name identifier.” Rather, Swan describes a user interface having a plurality of separate text-entry fields in which an end user can input text; there is no way for an end user in the system described in Swan to enter “one or more text characters [that] specify a first name identifier” and “one or more text characters [that] specify a second name identifier” and “one or more of the text characters [that] specify a relationship between the first name identifier and the second name identifier” in “a single text-entry field of a user interface associated with a database,” as recited by amended claim 1.

Swan also does not render amended claim 1 obvious. In particular, the method recited by amended claim 1 gives rise to significant advantages that are neither possible nor contemplated by Swan. For example, the method of amended claim 1 permits a user to submit one search request, from a “single text-entry field.” “By specifying this information in one search request, the user does not need to enter a series of manual selections in order to obtain a desired set of search results.” (See the specification filed on March 25, 2004, at page 2, lines 13-15.) Moreover, permitting the user to enter a search request in a “single text-entry field” can enable, in some implementations, a very simple, small search interface; in contrast, the user interface depicted in FIG. 10 of Swan is much larger, which, in some implementations, consumes far more real estate in a corresponding user interface.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons outlined above, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 and the corresponding dependent claims 2-5 and 8-15 are patentable over Swan and ask that the Examiner withdraw the rejections based on Swan. Amended independent claims 16 and 17 recite similar language as that discussed above with respect to amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, amended claims 16 and 17 are believed to be patentable over Swan for the reasons provided above with reference to amended claim 1. Applicants ask for the withdrawal of the rejection based on Swan of amended independent claims 16 and 17 and of the corresponding dependent claims 18 and 19.

Conclusion

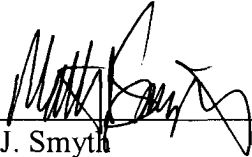
Applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 1-5 and 8-19 are in condition for allowance and request that the Examiner allow them.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

This response is being filed with a Petition for One-Month Extension of Time and the corresponding fee. No other fees are believed to be due at this time. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: JANUARY 19, 2007



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